

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

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SUBJ: MOROCCAN-SPANISH RELATIONS: KING ON PRIVATE VISIT TO SPAIN

1. INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY. MOROCCAN-SPANISH RELATIONS HAVE BEEN THE SUBJECT OF CONSIDERABLE ACTIVITY AND COMMENTARY HERE IN RECENT DAYS, INCLUDING FOCUS ON THE SPANISH CORTES FONAFF COMMITTEE DEBATES AND GOS COMMENTARY, AND INTERVIEW BY THE SPANISH AMBASSADOR IN RABAT, TWO CONCURRENT VISITS OF LARGE SPANISH DELEGATIONS OF JOURNALISTS AND BUSINESSMEN, AND, MOST RECENTLY, KING HASSAN'S SUDDEN "PRIVATE" VISIT ON JANUARY 27 TO SPAIN. THE GOM HAS ATTEMPTED TO STRESS THE POSITIVE THROUGHOUT AND TO ARGUE FOR MOVING AHEAD IN IMPROVING RELATIONS. IT ROLLED OUT THE RED CARPET FOR THE VISITING DELEGATIONS. AT THE SAME TIME, HIGH-LEVEL PUBLIC STATEMENTS HAVE TENDED TO POINT UP THE GOM'S FRUSTRATIONS OVER SPANISH EQUIVOCATING ON THE MADRID ACCORDS
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AND BALKING ON THE FISHING AGREEMENT, REFLECTING CONTINUING SUSPICION BETWEEN THE TWO IN BILATERAL RELATIONS. END SUMMARY

2. OFFICIAL NEWS AGENCY MAP QUOTED OFFICIAL SOURCES JANUARY 26 AS ANNOUNCING THAT KING HASSAN PLANNED PRIVATE VISIT TO SPAIN STARTING JAN. 27 AT INVITATION OF KING JUAN CARLOS. ANNOUNCEMENT FOLLOWED PRESS STORIES EMANATING FROM MADRID THAT HASSAN WOULD

PAY WEEKEND HUNTING VISIT AND WOULD HOLD DISCUSSIONS WITH JUAN CARLOS.

3. THE SPANISH CORTES FONAFF COMMITTEE JAN. 12 RESOLUTION ON THE SAHARA PROVOKED A STRONG INITIAL REACTION FROM THE GOM (RABAT 0346-NOTAL), BUT SUBSEQUENT COMMENTARY AVOIDED CONTNENTIOUSNESS. IN A PUBLISHED INTERVIEW, THE SPANISH AMBASSADOR AFFIRMED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE FONAFF COMMITTEE OF THE MOROCCAN PARLIAMENT THAT SPANISH POLICY ON THE SAHARA REMAINED UNCHANGED. IN ROLLING OUT THE RED CARPET FOR TWO GROUPS OF 140 SPANISH JOURNALISTS AND BUSINESSMEN, FIRST PRIMIN OSMAN AND THEN KING HASSAN STRESSED THE NEED TO LOOK FORWARD RATHER THAN BACKWARD AND CHOSE TO PLAY DOWN ANY UNPLEASANT DECLARATIONS COMING FROM MADRID. THE PRESS GROUP'S TRAVELS INCLUDED A VVISIT TO THE SAHARA. KING GAVE JOURNALISTS AND BUSINESSMEN SEPARATE AUDIENCES.

4. IN COURSE OF HOUR-LONG JAN. 17 PRESS CONFERENCE WITH THE JOURNALISTS, IN WHICH KING TOOK SOME TOUGH QUESTIONS FROM LEFTISTS, HIS THEME THROUGHOUT WAS TO MOVE AHEAD TO SOLIDIFY TIES. HASSAN ALSO:

- NOTED THAT THE TWO NATIONS WERE "CONDEMNED TO COEXIST SO AS TO ASSUME THE ROLE...OF GUARDING ONE OF THE MOST DANGEROUS PASSAGES IN THE WORLD" (STRAITS OF GIBRALTAR).

- EXTOLLED PERSONAL RELATIONS BETWEEN HIM AND JUAN CARLOS.

- REFUSED TO CONSIDER ANY MODIFICATION OF MADRID ACCORDS.

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ITS POLITICAL ASPECTS WERE CLOSED, AND THE TWO MUST NOW PROCEED TO IMPLEMENT ITS ECONOMIC ASPECTS.

- WONDERED WHY LEGITIMACY OF JEMAA HAD BEEN ACCEPTED BY SOME SPANISH AT EARLIER TIME AND NOT LATER WHEN IT VOTED TO INTEGRATE SAHARA INTO MOROCCO.

- CALLED FOR RATIFICATION OF ALREADY NEGOTIATED BILATERAL FISHING ACCORD, WHICH IN INTEREST OF BOTH PARTIES.

- COMPARED MOROCCAN SENSIBILITIES ON SAHARA TO SPANISH SENSIBILITIES OVER CANARIES.

5. LATEST DEVELOPMENT, HASSAN'S PLANNED PRIVATE VISIT TO SPAIN, AROSE SUDDENLY AND IS CLEARLY PART OF RATHER EXTRAORDINARY CONCERTED EFFORT TO BOLSTER MOROCCO'S NORTHERN FLANK. HASSNA'S PERSPECTIVE UNDOUBTEDLY GOES BEYOND HIS CURRENT SAHARAN CONCERNS, ALTHOUGH THESE ARE NOW PRIMORDIAL. THE FRENCH ELECTIONS ARE LOOMING LARGE HERE, AND HE MOST LIKELY BELIEVES THE BEST WAY OF GUARDING HIS INTEREST TO THE NORTH IS TO ATTEMPT TO SELL TO ALL ELEMENTS IN SPAIN THE IDEA THAT GOOD RELATIONS WITH MOROCCO ARE IN SPANISH NATIONAL INTERESTS TOO. KING PROBABLY ALSO TRYING TO PROFIT FROM APPARENT COOLING IN SPANISH-ALGERIAN RELATIONS. ABOVE ALL, THE MOROCCAN SHORT TERM GOAL IS TO PROTECT THE INTEGRITY OF THE 1975 MADRID ACCORDS.

6. THIS WILL BE THE FIRST MEETING BETWEEN HASSAN AND JUAN CARLOS SINCE THE LATTER ASSUMED THE THRONE. IT IS ALSO HASSAN'S FIRST FOREIGN TRAVEL SINCE DECEMBER 1976, WHEN HE VISITED FRANCE. ANDERSON

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